SARON NEWSLETTER

Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA)
510 Main Street
St. Joseph, Michigan 49085

Website: www.saronlutheran.org
Email: info@saronlutheran.org
Phone: 269-983-1273
Facebook:www.facebook.com/saronlutheranchurchst.joseph

The Rev. Joan Oleson, Pastor
Home: 269-983-2475
Email: oleson@saronlutheran.org

Marcus Roll, Senior Choir Director,
Bell Choir Director
Email: roll1mc@gmail.com
Irma Gorman, Organist
Amanda Bradley, Administrative
Assistant (beginning July 1)
Megan Savage, Financial Secretary
Email: financial@saronlutheran.org
Emily Gaul, Child Care

Typical Sunday Schedule at Saron:
During the School Year:
8:30 & 11:00 A.M. Worship
Childcare provided
9:40 Learning for Ages 2 – Adult

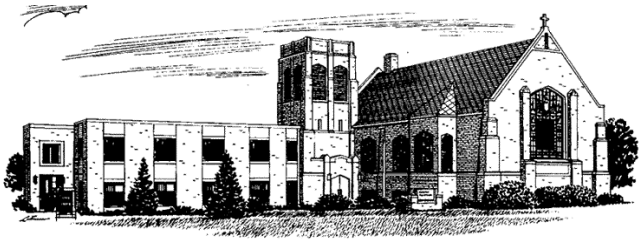
Summer of 2021 (thru Labor Day weekend):
Zoom and In-Person
10:00 Holy Communion
NO Childcare provided at this time
No Learning Hour

All are welcome!

We hold in prayer:
The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton,
Presiding Bishop, ELCA
The Rev. Dr. Craig Satterlee, Bishop of the
North/West Lower Michigan Synod, ELCA
The Episcopal Diocese of Western MI

Our Companion Synods:
Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras
Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea
Lutheran Church of Latvia

Saron's Mission:
Joyfully sharing God's love for all!!



July 2021

You may call it change. You may call it transition. Either word works and it seems as if we have a lot of it, or that it has become the norm. I'm not sure that is bad. I am sure it is reality, whether within the church and outside of it.

Here are a couple of transitional items within Saron currently.

UPDATES ON RESTRICTIONS - At Monday's council meeting, due to new CDC and MI guidelines, we have made the following updates. Beginning immediately, we have lifted the restriction on numbers for Sunday morning worship. *However, if you are not fully vaccinated, we ask that you continue to wear a mask.* If you are vaccinated and want to wear a mask for any reason, please do so. We will not mandate physical distancing or register attendees for contact tracing purposes. At least through the month of July, we will have no congregational singing. This will be re-evaluated at our July council meeting. There will be no childcare, at least through the summer. And, if you have any symptoms of illness, we encourage you to stay at home. We will continue to have Zoom worship, besides our in-the-building worship.

RETIREMENT – After 40 years of faithfully serving as Saron's administrative assistant, Margaret Froehlich is retiring, effective June 30. We will give thanks for her and what she has meant to the Saron ministry at worship on June 27.

NEW ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT – Beginning July 1, Amanda Bradley will serve as Saron's new administrative assistant. We welcome Amanda and the many gifts she brings to this role. Amanda will be at the office on Monday and Thursday mornings. More details to come!

INTERN – Preparations are being made for Vicar Patrick Blanchard's arrival on September 1. Details to come!

In the midst of all the transitions, one thing we can be assured of is that God's love for us, God's love for all, does not change. God is faithful. God promises to be with us. ALWAYS. Thanks be to God!

Pastor Joan

Caring and Sharing

In Our Prayers –

Richard Schalon is at the Whitcomb Tower Retirement Center, St. Joseph; **Bernice Koski** and **Kathleen Preston** at Woodland Terrace, Bridgman.

Office Hours at Saron (these hours will vary during Covid-19)
Beginning July 1 –
Amanda Bradley (administrative assistant)
Monday and Thursday mornings; Weds as needed
Volunteers: Weds, 9:15 AM - 11 AM (approximately)
Megan Savage (financial secy); Tues & Thurs 5:30 PM
financial@saronlutheran.org
When Pastor is out of town, emergency pastoral care information can be obtained by calling the church office (983.1273) or contacting the president of the congregation.

Note: E-mails meant for Pastor should be addressed to oleson@saronlutheran.org. E-mails to Margaret and the church office should be addressed to info@saronlutheran.org.

Happy Birthday Wishes to Saron's Members in July 2021
July 3 - Ellie Hammer
4 – Andrew Huff
7 - Preston Akers
8 - Elliott de la Foret
9 – Barbara Stelter
11 - Thomas Freemire
Emmett Gray-Roll
Thatcher Gray-Roll
12 - Scott Gaspari
14 - Kylie Hammer
17 - Andrew Gustafson
Aaron Becker
23 – Lauren (Olson) Kauffman
25 – John Koehler
Richard Osgood
26 – Pastor Joan Oleson
Robert Hopkins
28 - Jennifer Nicholas
29 – Ilo Coar

Happy Anniversary Wishes to Saron's Members In July 2021
July 3 – Adam and Shavonn Bradley
4 - Robert and Gloria Hopkins
7 – Marcus Roll and Beth Gray-Roll
12 – Rian and Judi Huff
14 - Joseph and Katherine Ulrey
25 – Brent and Linda Dipert
26 – Nick and Kati (Huff) Hooper

"God's Blessings for a very happy day and year round"

If there is anyone who has been omitted, or, if the dates are incorrect from the birthday and anniversary list, please call the church office at 983-1273. Thank you. Congratulations

With Sympathy
We extend our sympathy to the family of Laraine Taylor upon her death on June 2, 2021. Per Laraine's wishes, no memorial service is planned.

God is our refuge and strength. Psalm 46:1a

Memorial Services Scheduled
Due to Covid, the following memorial services were delayed until we could gather again.

Marlene Schalon (death May 6, 2020)
Saturday, July 10; **10:30 a.m**. at Saron

Betty Ross (date of death – December 9, 2020)
Monday, August 9; 11 a.m. at Saron

Baptism
Our best wishes and God's blessings to Paxton Walker Zwar, son of Steve and Sarah upon his baptism on June 10. Godparents are Matt and Amanda Bradley.

Confirmation
We wish God's blessings upon, Eric Burrow, Mia Bradley, and Brooke Henderson who were confirmed on June 10.

Thank you!

Dear Saron Family,
Kathy and I and our family were overwhelmed and humbled by the special blessing program given to us by Saron on the anniversary of my 50th year of ordination into the ministry. Thank you to Pastor Oleson for all her creative thoughts and work. Thanks also to Bishop Satterlee for his comments. Thank you, Pastor Alissa Oleson for your technical contribution. Thanks to all of you for the cards and phone calls. It is an honor to have served as your pastor at Saron. It has been a unique, challenging and joy filled journey to have been allowed to serve our Lord for so many years. We are grateful for the privilege of having all of you in our lives.

Go in Peace. Love and Serve the Lord.
Pastor Gary and Kathy

FORTIFY & fly

One of the commitments we made at the beginning of our Capital Appeal was to tithe (give 10% of) our receipts to ministries outside of Saron. One of the grateful recipients of our gifts is the Readiness Center of Benton Harbor. Here is a recent note we received from the executive director.

Thank you for your generous gift to the children & parents. Your faithful support, especially over the past year, has reached wonderful families who have persevered through a wild year to get a solid foundation for the learning years ahead. As we celebrate "graduation" this week we are grateful for your part in helping the families learn & grow together!

With Prayer & Gratitude,
Martha Theineman

Thank you for your continued giving to the Fortify and Fly Campaign. As of the end of May, we had collected $350,955 towards our 3-year pledge total of $367,205. Your generosity abounds!

Worship

FACEBOOK
We love to share pictures of Saron's ministry on our Facebook page and we get great feedback. It is our practice not to put names with the pictures. If you have questions, or prefer your picture not to appear, please contact Pastor.

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS
As you prepare for worship, you are invited to read and reflect on the Scriptures for the day.

Sun. July 4 —
Sixth Sunday after Pentecost
Ezekiel 2:1-5
Psalm 123
2 Corinthians 12:2-10
Mark 6:1-13

Sun. July 11 —
Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
Amos 7:7-15
Psalm 85:8-13
Ephesians 1:3-14
Mark 6:14-29

Sun. July 18 —
Eighth Sunday after Pentecost
Jeremiah 23:1-6
Psalm 23
Ephesians 2:11-22
Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

Sun. July 25 —
Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
2 Kings 4:42-44
Psalm 145:10-18
Ephesians 3:14-21
John 6:1-21

Youth

Are you in grades 6-12? Please join us for youth group activities! For more info, contact Scott at *scottgaspari@outlook.com or (Cell) 847-373-8825.*

LEARNING

Saron is a congregation seeking to become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, empowered and sent by the Word.

Tuesday Evening Men's Bible Study
Our arrangements will be different from now on. We will now meet in the lounge of the church. We'll start at 6:00pm as usual and will have discussion until about 7:00pm. Those who want to can then join the others at Azul Tequila for something to eat and more conversation.

LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ALL TUESDAY

"Iron Sharpens Iron and One Person Sharpens the Wits of Another"

Saron Men's Bible Study meets every Tuesday at 6:00 pm using Zoom for communication. If you have any questions, feel free to call or text Bob Kynast at 269-921-2786 or Don Hafer at 269-985-3637. We look forward to seeing you.

Bob Kynast
bobkynast@gmail.com

1ST SUNDAY BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP
We are taking our yearly summer vacation from gathering, but not reading. Here are the 2021-2022 books we have chosen for good discussions starting again in October. October 3, 2021: ANXIOUS PEOPLE, by Fredrik Backman. November 7, 2021: SAVE ME THE PLUMS, by Ruth Reichl. December 5, 2021: THE BOOK OF LOST FRIENDS by Lisa Wingate. February 13, 2022: RADIUM GIRLS by Kate Moore. March 6, 2022: 100 DAYS OF HAPPINESS by Fausto Brizzi. April 3, 2022: FOUR WINDS by Kristen Hannah. May 1, 2022: THE MIDNIGHT LIBRARY by Matt Haig. Join us for a season of good reads, good discussions and good times simply being together. All are welcome at any session.

"Here's to good books, the cheapest vacation you can buy". (Charlaine Harris)

Men's monthly Bible Devotions and Breakfast
Men's Bible Devotion will not meet in July.
Contact Dennis Lundgren for Zoom information.

THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY
Our Thursday study continues into the summer. We will meet outdoors at Saron on Thursday mornings at 9:30 a.m. We will also continue to Zoom for those who would like to join in that way. Let Pastor know if you would like the Zoom info. Our study each week will be on the upcoming Sunday's Gospel lesson. Please bring a lawn chair for seating.

Endowment Committee
The Committee met in June and recommend disbursements to five organizations. The Saron Church Council approved disbursements to:

100 Women Strong - $3,000
Castor Bean Program in Zimbabwe - $3,000
Interfaith Action Group of SW Michigan - $1,250
Lory's Place - $3,000
Trinity Lutheran Church Battle Creek - $3,000

If you are aware of an organization that is in need of funding, please email Marilyn Frey at marilynhfrey@gmail.com or bobkynast@gmail.com. Funds are disbursed twice a year, and the amount is based on the performance of funds invested with the Berrien Community Foundation and the ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust.

Women of the ELCA

Deborah Circle will gather for dinner at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 14, 2021 at Lake House Restaurant in St. Joseph. Everyone will be contacted close to that date to determine an accurate reservation number.

Hospitality

Watch for more news as we get closer to getting back together in the building.

Outreach

BENTON HARBOR SOUP KITCHEN

Did you know that one in every seven Michigan residents struggle with hunger? 318,960 are children. Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen Newsletter

On May 27th 110 people enjoyed a sack lunch prepared by four volunteers from Saron. Mary Alice Brunner, Colleen Lundgren, and Dave & Kathie Bradley prepared & assembled the lunches which included hot dogs, an apple, chips and cookies baked by Marilyn Lucy, Kris Webber, Krin Jurgensen, and Amy Nelson.

If you feel comfortable helping to prepare a sack lunch at the Soup Kitchen, baking cookies, or have any questions please contact Kathie Bradley (269-921-4665)

Thank you to all who continue to support this ministry with your time, contributions, & prayers. During this pandemic it is even more important to continue Saron's mission of *Joyfully sharing God's love for all!!!*

CHAIRS FOR THE TAKING

Are you in need of an office chair? We have 3 available due to our office renovations. Please contact the church office or Pastor Joan if you are interested. If they are not claimed by mid-July, they will be donated elsewhere.

INCLUSIVITY TASK FORCE

Thank you to all who filled out the task force's recent survey. The results were overwhelmingly positive in its acceptance of the proposed statement of welcome and affirmation. (See below.) With that in mind, our conversations will continue with how best to extend that welcome to the LGBTQIA community as well as the many whom we name in our proposed welcome statement. If you have any questions, please feel free to call any one of the task force members, as listed here.

Connor Ashley cashley1837@outlook.com
Laurel Gacek 269/470-6062 mlmg2445@sbcglobal.net
Laura Hicks 517/930-0579 lhicks42@gmail.com
Darlene Kiessel 269/313-4062 kiessel@me.com
Diane Madej (Open Hearts. Open Church, N/WLM Synod) 231/670-0328 dianemadej234@gmail.com
Pastor Joan Oleson 269/983-1273 oleson@saronlutheran.org

Here is Saron's proposed Welcome Statement, as affirmed by the council.
"As a community of faith who joyfully shares God's love for all, we believe our lives and faith are strengthened by diversity. We strive to be a community who welcomes people of every ability, age, citizenship status, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, language, marital status, political perspective, race, and sexual orientation. Whatever life's circumstance, we openly welcome and value you. We celebrate God's unconditional love and respond joyfully to your presence here. All are welcome. You are welcome."

Quote for the Week

"We are all one in love. . . . When I look at myself as an individual, I see that I am nothing. It is only in unity with my fellow spiritual seekers that I am anything at all. It is this foundation of unity that will save humanity." -Julian of Norwich

Interfaith Action

Interfaith Action (swmichiganinterfaith.org) is a coalition of over 40 faith communities in Allegan, Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph, and Van Buren Counties. Some members of Saron attend their meetings and work with various task force groups. One of the goals of Interfaith Action is to promote understanding and respect for diversity. We hope this discussion will advance that goal by enriching our appreciation for our shared humanity.

Blossomland CROP Walk – Fundraising Results

Thank you to everyone who supported Pastor Joan Oleson and Karen Johnson in their accumulation of real steps towards the virtual Blossomland CROP Walk that was held on Sunday, May 16, 2021. Together we raised $755.00 to date which has been turned over to the local organizer, St. Joseph First United Methodist Church. We expect some additional funds to come in which might push us up to the $1,000 level! Many thanks again for your contributions!

Outreach Committee: Karen Johnson and Jim Manore

Support

The Support Committee will continue meeting on the second Monday of each month as usual, but starting with the July meeting we are changing the start time from 7:00 pm to **8:00 pm**. Meetings will continue to be held on Zoom. Please make this change to the July calendar and subsequent months.

Let me know if there are any questions. Thanks. Don Hafer

STOCK DONATIONS

Saron partners with TD Ameritrade, a brokerage firm, to accept stock donations. If you would like to donate stock, email Joe Ulrey to receive more information. Thanks! Joe Ulrey josephulrey@yahoo.com

Facilities

NEW NAME – What? No More Golden Hammers?

For years they have been called the Golden Hammers. As we return to the building, rediscover roles and responsibilities, and discern what comes next, there was a discussion about changing the name for this volunteer group to Helping Hands! What a great idea! Once formed around the building of a new addition, the work has shifted, and the hammer is no longer the primary tool being used. You got it – the primary tool these days is the hand – God's work. Our Hands. – being used for all sorts of things from building maintenance to preps for worship in the sanctuary to assembling bulletins and newsletters and so much more. Watch for details about when this newly named group will begin their work again and know that you are invited – whatever your age, gender, or ability. There will be a job for you to use your helping hands.

SARON LUTHERAN CHURCH
510 MAIN STREET
ST. JOSEPH, MI 49085

Website: www.saronlutheran.org
Email:info@saronlutheran.org

A Congregation of:
The North/West Lower Michigan Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

July 2021

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 9:30 a.m. Bible Study	**2**	3 **NO** 9:00a.m. Men's Bible Devotion Meeting
4 Worship at 10:00 a.m. Hybrid-Zoom and In-The-Building Independence Day	5 Church Office Closed Independence Day Holiday	**6** 6:00 p.m. Men's Bible Study	**7** 11:00 a.m. Virtual Coffee Hour	**8** 9:30 a.m. Bible Study	**9**	10 Memorial Service At 11:00 a.m. for Marlene Schalon
11 Worship at 10:00 a.m. Hybrid-Zoom and In-The-Building	**12** 11:00 a.m. Prayer Time (in homes) **8:00 p.m.** Support Comm. Newsletter Articles Due	**13** 6:00 p.m. Men's Bible Study	**14** 11:00 a.m. Virtual Coffee Hour	**15** 9:30 a.m. Bible Study	**16**	17
18 Worship at 10:00 a.m. Hybrid-Zoom and In-The-Building Gray-Roll Baptisms	**19** 11:00 a.m. Prayer Time (in homes) 7:00 p.m. Church Council Meeting Pastor on	**20** 6:00 p.m. Men's Bible Study Vacation ---------	**21** NO 11:00 a.m. Virtual Coffee Hour ----------	**22** 9:30 a.m. Bible Study ----------	**23** ----------	24 ----------
25 Worship at 10:00 a.m. Hybrid-Zoom and In-The-Building ----------	**26** 11:00 a.m. Prayer Time (in homes) Pastor back	**27** 6:00 p.m. Men's Bible Study	**28** 11:00 a.m. Virtual Coffee Hour	**29** 9:30 a.m. Bible Study	**30**	31